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## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/15643

DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/15643>



### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### SOLUTIONS TO POSITION-BASED DEVELOPMENT OF A CONTINGENT OF VIETNAMESE HIGH-SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Pro. Dr.Thai Van Thanh and Ms. Nguyen Van Khoa  
Department of Education and Training Nghe An, VietNam.

#### Manuscript Info

##### Manuscript History

Received: 05 September 2022

Final Accepted: 09 October 2022

Published: November 2022

##### Key words:-

Administrator, Key High-School  
Administrator, Development, Position-  
Based

#### Abstract

Through clarifying the role of the key high-school administrators, this article proposed five solutions to the job position-based development of the key high-school administrators below: Developing a master plan for key high-school administrators by local high-school education development; Recruiting and employing key-high school administrators who meet the job requirements; Holding position-based professional training courses for key high-school administrators; Assessing key high-school administrators using position-based competency framework; Creating a favorable environment for key high-school administrators to promote and develop their leadership and school administration competencies.

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#### Introduction:-

It can be said that key high-school administrators constitute the most “elite” force among educational administrators. According to the Vietnamese standard on principals of general education institutions, key high-school administrators include high-school principals and vice principals with good moral character and leadership and school administration reputation; understanding of the educational situation in the new context; the ability to advise and support colleagues at work and in fostering and developing leadership and school administration competencies.

According to the administrator training model recently deployed by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam, instead of “re-training” local mass administrators in the full-time mode, each key general education institution administrator, after receiving online and on-site training from key pedagogical trainers will support 20 - 30 colleagues in self-learning modules on the online learning management system (LMS). The key general education institution administrators will answer questions related to the training content, coursework, and application of the acquired knowledge in the practice of school administrators.

Besides the significant role in training local administrators, key general education institution administrators, including key high-school administrators, also pioneer all innovations of the schools; are exemplary models of leadership and school administration; can advise, support, inspire and train their colleagues on leadership and school administration. Developing key high-school administrators is, thus, an urgent issue.

Key high-school administrators are an important human resource in education. The development of this force can be based on different models among which, the position-based approach to human resource management is the most suitable for the development of key high-school administrators. This approach is based on the functions and tasks (employment) of (present and future) key high-school administrators to create a competency framework for key

**Corresponding Author:- Pro. Dr.Thai Van Thanh**

Address:- Department of Education and Training Nghe An, VietNam.

high-school administrators on which key high-school administrators are recruited, employed, trained, assessed, and provided with appropriate remuneration.

### **Some solutions to job position-based development of a contingent of key high-school administrators**

#### **Developing a master plan for key high-school administrators by local high-school education development**

Personnel planning is an essential step and a regular task too early to discover qualified, capable, reputable, and promising employees for potential training, retraining, rotation, and appointment to establish a source of leaders and administrators at all levels. Personnel planning is conducted in a "dynamic" and "open" manner. "Dynamic" planning involves periodically reviewing, adding to, or removing from the planning employees who are no longer qualified and capable of completing their tasks. "Open" planning means an open approach according to which the human resource is not limited to a locality, institution, or unit, but is expanded with those from other places so that the personnel planning includes qualified employees who meet standards, conditions, and requirements of localities, institutions and units. Therefore, the development of the master plan for key high-school administrators must also be based on the foregoing purposes, requirements, and principles of personnel planning. Accordingly, developing a master plan for key high-school administrators must ensure the purposes and requirements of the planning, with a standardized process, and subject to regular reviews, supplementation, and adjustment. The following tasks should be done to develop a master plan for key high-school administrators:

#### **- Determining the purposes and requirements for developing a master plan for key high-school administrators**

Developing a master plan for key high-school administrators aims to create a sufficient, synchronous, and quality contingent of key high-school administrators and make a significant contribution to the renovation of high school education in the current period. Therefore, it must satisfy, among other things, the following requirements: being based on specified standards, structure, and quantity; being compatible with the development of high school education in terms of size, quality of staff, and other local conditions; and following a mixed "dynamic" and "open" approach.

#### **- Developing a master plan for key high-school administrators according to a certain process**

It will be more convenient and standardized if developing a master plan for key high-school administrators follows a certain process with specific steps. The process of developing a master plan for key high-school administrators comprises the following steps: Survey the current situation of key high-school administrators; Analyze the current situation of key high-school administrators; Identify opportunities and challenges in developing key high-school administrators, and Develop a master plan for key high-school administrators by academic year and period.

#### **- Regularly reviewing, supplementing, and adjusting the planning**

It is particularly important to regularly review, supplement and adjust the personnel planning. This task helps add new members to the contingents and, at the same time, remove those who no longer meet the standards. Likewise, regarding the development of key high-school administrators, it is also necessary to regularly review, supplement and adjust the planning. Through the planning review, supplementation, and adjustment, leaders of local education management agencies can deeply and fully realize the significance of the administrator planning, in general, and administrator planning review, supplementation, and adjustment, in particular, including key high-school administrator-related work.

### **Recruiting and employing key-high school administrators who meet the job requirements**

Personnel recruitment involves seeking, sorting out, and selecting employees with qualified political qualities, moral character, competencies, and prestige to take on leadership, management, and other positions in the political system. Good personnel recruitment is a premise for arranging and employing the right staff for the right job, contributing to building a contingent of employees at all levels who are wholeheartedly committed to their assigned tasks and bring into full play their potential and creativity to fulfill development goals of localities, agencies, and units. Along with personnel recruitment, the appropriate employment of personnel is also significantly effective in leading, directing, and executing political tasks. Following such personnel recruitment and employment policy, educational institutions' recruitment and employment of personnel, in general, and key high-school administrators, in particular, should be based on the job requirements. Job requirements are the foundation for the effective and proper recruitment and employment of key high-school administrators. It is vital to well perform the following task to recruit and employ key high-school administrators who meet their respective job requirements:

#### **- Recruiting key high-school administrators who meet the job requirements**

To recruit key high-school administrators who meet the job requirements, it is crucial to establish recruitment criteria; determine recruitment principles; and arrange the recruitment of key high-school administrators according to a certain process (communicating standards for key high-school administrators; making a list of potential key high-school administrators; Consulting high-school administrators and teachers; Setting up a recruitment council; reporting by the Director of the Department of Education and Training to the Ministry of Education and Training).

- Employing key high-school administrators who meet the job requirements

The efficient employment of key high-school administrators who meet the job requirements requires an understanding of the competencies of each key high school-administrator, the development of their profiles, and their arrangement in line with their ability to meet different job requirements.

### **Holding position-based professional training courses for key high-school administrators**

The role of educational administrators is to run a large and complex system and deploy diverse and flexible educational policies to proactively and creatively address emerging issues including administration decentralization, educational autonomy associated with accountability, resource mobilization and educational democratization, educational administration digitization, etc. Amid the current context, educational administrators must always act towards innovation and development; create consensus within the team and organization, and instruct, advise, support, and facilitate all school members in development. All of such innovation requires educational administrators to be well-prepared regularly in terms of expertise and management skills through training and fostering activities. Key high-school administrators are deemed the “best” and the most “elite” members among high-school administrators. Therefore, key high-school administrators must constantly study, practice, and improve their moral qualities, professional qualifications, management skills, and responsibilities. Position-based professional training and improvement are highly efficient in the development of human resources, in general, and key high-school administrators, in particular. This approach is superior because it concentrates on establishing the lacking competencies required for key high-school administrators and strengthening and enhancing their existing ones. With all the general and specific competencies, key high-school administrators will well meet their respective job requirements; in other words, they will have favorable opportunities to develop themselves steadily. Regarding position-based professional training for key high-school administrators, it is most significant to determine which competencies to be improved in comparison between the required competencies and the existing ones of the trainees. To provide key high-school administrators with position-based professional training and enhancement, it is necessary to well perform the following tasks:

- Determining the purposes and requirements of position-based professional training and enhancement for key high-school administrators

The professional training aims to establish and develop the general and specific competencies for the key high-school administrators to better satisfy their respective job requirements. The purposes of professional training cover both providing the key high-school administrators with lacking competencies, especially specific ones and strengthening their existing yet weak competencies. Furthermore, position-based professional training and enhancement for key high-school administrators are also required to aim at “creating the potential for their development”. In addition to their present functions and tasks, key high-school administrators also have to perform future ones when their job positions are expanded. To do so, the training of key high-school administrators should satisfy the following requirements: it must originate from the training needs of key high-school administrators; it must closely combine the knowledge of the job position with the practice; it must promote innovative leadership and administration of high schools, and it must contribute to the reliable development of key high-school administrators.

- Making a position-based professional training plan for key high-school administrators

The position-based professional training planning for key high-school administrators involves making a list of training tasks to be carried out with certain timeframes, priorities, and resources based on their respective job requirements. Similar to other plans, the position-based professional training plan for key high-school administrators covers the following parts: training objectives, training contents, how to conduct the training plan, time and place of training, trainers, training funding, and how to check and evaluate the training plan. The SMART technique (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound) can be used to make a sound training plan.

- Designing position-based professional training programs for key high-school administrators

On November 1, 2019, the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam promulgated Circular No. 18/2019/TT-BGDĐT on the continuing training program for general education institution administrators. This program is intended to provide training according to the job requirements; deliver annual training on specialized knowledge and skills for general education institution administrators; and establish a basis for managing, directing, organizing, and compiling training and self-training documents to improve the quality, leadership and school administration competencies of general education institution administrators, meeting their job requirements and enhancing their responsiveness to the requirements of general education development and the standards for general education institution principals. To boost continuing training for general education institution administrators, the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam issued Official Letter No. 4660/QĐ-BGDĐT dated December 4, 2019, on the list of training modules for key general education institution administrators. The training program for key high-school administrators is substantially consistent with the continuing training program for general education institution administrators. This program supports key high-school administrators in mastering training contents whilst facilitating them in accompanying their colleagues in continuing training and development of leadership and school administration. Yet, the list of training modules for key high-school administrators under Official Letter No. 4660/QĐ-BGDĐT lacks a module in connection to the performance of specific functions and tasks of key high-school administrators. It is, thus, necessary to include a module: Counseling and supporting colleagues in continuing training and development of leadership and high-school administration.

- Formulating a position-based professional training process for key high-school administrators

The training for general education institution administrators, in general, and key high-school ones, in particular, require following a certain process with the following steps: analyzing the training situation of key high-school administrators in the area; Exploring the training needs of key high-school administrators in the area; Develop a training plan for key high-school administrators in the area; Conducting the training plan for key high-school administrators in the area, and Assessing the results of training for key high-school administrators in the area.

- Combining different forms of position-based professional training for key high-school administrators

A variety of training forms including on-site, online, and both forms can be employed to train key high-school administrators in the area. Due to the advantages and disadvantages of each form, it is recommended to combine them to promote their advantages and eliminate their shortcomings in training key high-school administrators in the area.

### **Assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework**

Assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework is vital to the development of key high-school administrators according to the position-based approaches. This helps identify the existing competencies of the key high-school administrators, what more they need to have, and the level of the existing ones. That assessment results truthfully reflect the capabilities, qualities, and responsiveness to job requirements of key high-school administrators. Assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework is an indispensable requirement in the current educational administration innovation. The assessment using a position-based competency framework will create a breakthrough in the assessment of officials and public employees in general, and key high-school administrators, in particular, shifting from a human-focused to a job-focus approach. The following tasks should be done well to assess key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework:

- Determining the purposes of assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework

Assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework aims at assisting key high-school administrators in self-assessing their leadership and school administration competencies to have a plan for self-training and self-improvement of their leadership and school administration competencies; Establishing a foundation for regulatory authorities to develop plans, train, and employ key high-school administrators, renew training programs to improve the quality of the contingent of key high-school administrators; and Serving as a ground for assessing, classifying, and deploying emulation and rewards for key high-school administrators every year...

- Developing criteria in the position-based competency framework for assessing key high-school administrators

Assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework essentially involves an

evaluation of the competencies contained in the key high-school administrators' competency framework including general competencies (personal professional development; school leadership; school operation administration; educational environment building; organization of activities to develop the relationship among school, family and society; and foreign language and IT application in school administration) and specific competencies (supporting and advising high school administrators in the area to develop plans for self-study and self-development of leadership and school management competencies; supporting high school administrators in the area to develop leadership and school management competencies; collaborating with local education regulatory authorities, and teacher and administrator training institutions; guiding and supporting teachers and high school administrators in joining and conducting online teacher training courses). This competency framework will be a ground for developing criteria for assessing key high-school administrators with the four following levels: Good; Fairly Good; Passed and Not Passed.

- Developing the process of assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework. The process of assessing key high-school administrators using a position-based competency framework comprises the following steps: Self-assessment by key high-school administrators according to assessment criteria for key high-school administrators; Consultation with administrators and teachers in high schools where key high-school administrators work or advise, and support and guide their colleagues; Assessment of key high-school administrators by the Director of the Department of Education and Training; Announcement and disclosure of assessment results of key high-school administrators.

- Utilizing assessment results for the development of the contingent of key high-school administrators in the next periods

The assessment results of key high-school administrators are not only used as inputs for classification, emulation, and reward of key high-school administrators but more importantly also considered in planning and innovating key high-school administrator training and employment, thereby meeting the present and future development requirements.

### **Creating a favorable environment for key high-school administrators to promote and develop their leadership and school administration competencies**

A working environment is the physical conditions (e.g., tools and work equipment, workspace, and workplace arrangement) and spiritual conditions (e.g., social interactions in the working environment and office culture). The working environment is considered an essential factor, greatly influencing employees' productivity and work performance. When working in a favorable environment, each employee will get more creative inspiration and motivation to do the best job. A favorable working environment usually includes the following elements: professionalism and friendliness, innovation, autonomy and cooperation, and cultural environment in the school. These elements are also observed in the favorable working environment of key high-school administrators. Thus, creating a favorable working environment for key high-school administration also means formulating and developing elements of professionalism and friendliness, innovation, autonomy, and cooperation in key high-school administrators' leadership and school administration environment. In addition to building a favorable working environment, it is vital to facilitate key high-school administrators in best promoting and developing their leadership and school administration competencies. These conditions are associated with remuneration entitlements and policies, and development and promotion opportunities of key high-school administrators. A favorable working environment and conditions will support key high-school administrators in nurturing and developing their leadership and school administration competencies. For a favorable environment and conditions for key high-school administrators to promote and develop their leadership and school administration competencies, it is vital to well do the following tasks:

- Building a professional and friendly working environment that encourages innovation and creativity, autonomy and cooperation in high schools

Building a professional and friendly working environment that encourages innovation and creativity and autonomy and cooperation in high schools requires standardization, planning, and process nation of the entire operation of high schools; encouragement and promotion of innovation and creativity in high schools; a close combination of autonomy and cooperation in high school activities; and friendliness and openness in high school activities

- Directing school culture building in high schools

School culture features a system of beliefs, values, standards, habits, and traditions formed during the school's development, recognized and followed by school members, and expressed in physical and mental forms, thereby establishing a unique identity for each school. School culture is shown in the school's mission, vision, and key values; its standards, values, beliefs, and atmosphere; its traditions, rituals, and ceremonies; its history and traditional stories; people and relationships in the school; and its architecture, artifacts, and symbols. The school culture is an invaluable asset of each school, with significance to all school members and the school's growth. To build a school culture, high schools should: Raise awareness among administrators, teachers, and staff about the significance of school culture in current general education innovation; Develop a healthy, democratic atmosphere in high schools; Promote a modern and safe pedagogical landscape and environment in the school; Build a compassionate educational environment that appreciates exemplary models; Promote right thoughts and noble feelings; Encourage good qualities, and healthy and advanced styles, always towards the truth, goodness, and beauty for constant self-improvement.

- Developing adequate entitlements and policies for key high-school administrators

To employees, entitlements and policies are very important. Appropriate entitlements and policies will drive employees to promote their initiatives and technical improvements for the best performance. In contrast, inadequate entitlements and policies may inhibit productivity and reduce employees' work enthusiasm. Remuneration entitlements and policies in education and training are equally vital. It is, thus, necessary to consider providing more adequate remuneration entitlements and policies for key high-school administrators.

There are 5 solutions to the position-based development of a contingent of key high-school administrators. Such proposed solutions are closely related to and interact with each other, creating a synchronous influence system on the process of the position-based development of key high-school administrators.

### **Conclusion:-**

Key high-school administrators play a crucial role in general education reform. Developing the contingent of key high-school administrators also means promoting elite high-school educational administration resources. The following solutions should be synchronously taken to effectively develop the contingent of key high-school administrators according to the position-based approach: Developing a master plan for key high-school administrators by local high-school education development; Recruiting and employing key-high school administrators who meet the job requirements; Holding position-based professional training courses for key high-school administrators; Assessing key high-school administrators using position-based competency framework; Creating a favorable environment for key high-school administrators to promote and develop their leadership and school administration competencies.

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